REMARKS

The above amendments and following remarks are submitted in response to the Official Action of the Examiner mailed March 19, 2003. Having addressed all objections and grounds of rejection, claims 1-20 as amended, being all the pending claims, are now deemed in condition for allowance. Entry of these amendments and reconsideration to that end is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,583,561, issued to Baker et al (hereinafter referred to as "Baker") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,049,823, issued to Hwang (hereinafter referred to as "Hwang"). In response thereto, claims 1, 6-7, 9, and 11-20 have been herewith amended. As a result, claims 1-20 are now deemed allowable over the prior art of record for the following reasons.

Claims 1 and 16 as previously presented are limited by a "transaction server" which "spools" video data for "streaming" by one of a plurality of "video servers". In this context, "spooling" is the function of downloading a requested video program from long term storage into a temporary storage readily accessible to the video server from which it is streamed (see for example Fig. 5, and corresponding description on page 19). The "spooling" process also stores the digitized video program in an order and format from which the video server need only perform a simple sequential access of the data and direct output of the same to the subscriber. This simple sequential access of the

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data and direct output to the subscriber is "streaming".

It is the key feature of Applicants' invention that the "transaction server" handles all of the non-repetitive and functionally diverse tasks including "spooling", and the "video servers" perform only the repetitive and single function task of "streaming" (see Applicants' summary at pages 7-10). This architectural feature is not found in the prior art of record because Baker utilizes a single processing element for handling the transaction and streaming the data, thereby rending the "spooling" task unnecessary. Hwang does not utilize the "spooling" function because video data is simply "played back" from long term storage and output directly to the subscriber.

To greater highlight the distinction created by the spooling/streaming dichotomy, claim 1 has been amended to add a "temporary video storage memory". The video data is spooled into this temporary video storage memory from longer term storage by the transaction server, and it is streamed out of this temporary video storage memory by the video server(s). Thus, claims 1 and 16, and all claims depending therefrom, are deemed patentable for this feature, as well as the other unique limitations of the depending claims.

Claims 6 and 11 have been further limited to providing a plurality of different video programs to a plurality of different subscribers from a single one of a plurality of video servers. As disclosed at page 20 of the specification, up to ten different programs can be streamed from a single video server of the

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disclosed preferred embodiment. The maximum number of different programs to be streamed, of course, involves the input/output passband of the individual video server.

This feature is readily distinguishable from Hwang, which states at column 13, lines 50-51:

> ....all the private-viewing functions require a
> dedicated Channel-processor for each customer.

Thus, claims 6-15 are deemed patentable over the prior art of record at least for this feature alone.

Having thus responded to each objection and ground of rejection, Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment and allowance of claims 1-20, being the only pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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By their attorney,

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